UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1997/465
16 June 1997
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 16 JUNE 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 15 June 1997 from Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, addressed to you, concerning practices of the Special Commission inspection team UNSCOM 194 intended to achieve aims that are unrelated to the mandate of the Special Commission or the relevant Security Council resolutions.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 15 June 1997 from the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have read the letter dated 12 June 1997 from Mr. Ekéus, the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission, addressed to you, in which he accuses Iraq of denying the Special Commission inspection team UNSCOM 194 access to three sites on 10 and 12 June 1997. I therefore thought it necessary to write to you, and to inform Security Council members of the facts relating to the inspections carried out by that team, and the circumstances surrounding the three incidents in question. We hope that the Council will carefully consider this letter and draw appropriate and objective conclusions.

The members of the Council are aware that Iraq has serious and real concerns relating to Special Commission inspection teams' access to sites important to its sovereignty or national security. They are also aware that incidents of a similar nature took place in the first half of 1996. Since the Iraqi side has been keen to strike an objective balance between facilitating the tasks of the Special Commission under the relevant Security Council resolutions and Iraq's legitimate concerns over its sovereignty and national security, it took part in serious and sincere discussions with the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission, who visited Iraq from 19 to 22 June 1996. Those discussions achieved a balanced formula that allowed the inspection teams access to sensitive sites related to its duties, on the basis provided for in the joint statement of 22 June 1996, whereby "the Special Commission undertook that, in carrying out its mandate and exercising its rights under the relevant Security Council resolutions, it would operate with full respect for the legitimate security concerns of Iraq." The two sides agreed on a joint programme of action to intensify their work with the aim of making it possible for the Commission to report as soon as possible to the Security Council that Iraq had met its obligations under section C of resolution 687 (1991).

In October 1996, I agreed with Mr. Ekéus that joint work should concentrate on reviewing the files and working to close them. The missile file should be dealt with first, followed by the chemical file and the biological file. Work did in fact proceed along these lines in the months which followed.

However, the Special Commission altered this approach, and in March 1997, began to carry out large-scale inspections, the likes of which had not been conducted for several years, of sites related to national security, on the pretext of verifying alleged claims of the concealment of proscribed items and activities. The UNSCOM 182 inspection team led by Mr. Roger Hill, with Colonel Scott Ritter, the current Chief Inspector of UNSCOM 194, as Deputy Chief Inspector, arrived in Iraq. From 8 to 16 March 1997 the team carried out 22 inspections of sites related to national security and to the security of the Presidency of the State (a list of those sites is given in Appendix I). The Iraqi side did its best to ensure that those inspections were carried out appropriately, and in a manner that would convince the Special Commission that those sites did not contain any items proscribed under Security Council resolutions, as alleged by the intelligence sources of some States which provide the Special Commission with such fabricated information.

The many surprise inspections that were carried out did not detect any concealed proscribed items. Their findings validated the position of Iraq, which has repeatedly assured the Special Commission that it does not conceal any proscribed items, and that the sources of the Commission's information in this respect are tendentious and inaccurate.

On 29 May 1997 Mr. Rolf Ekéus sent a letter to Lt. General Amer Mohammed Rashid, the Minister of Oil, informing him of his intention to send an inspection team to investigate alleged mechanisms for the concealment of proscribed activities and items.

This surprised and concerned us, since it means that the Special Commission is unwavering in the accusations it has repeated over and over again with no concrete evidence to substantiate them. It also means that in spite of the many opportunities the Special Commission has been given to verify this matter, it has yet to be laid to rest. The Commission keeps repeating the same allegations after every inspection and verification mission. On my recommendation, Lt. General Amer Mohammed Rashid sent a letter dated 30 May to Mr. Ekéus indicating that the allegations of concealment were a matter which the Special Commission had addressed over an extended period through past inspections and interviews. The facts indicate that the Special Commission has not found any evidence to prove its suspicions or support the allegations of concealment. Lt. General Rashid asked Mr. Ekéus to postpone sending the aforementioned inspection team until the matter had been discussed at the periodic high-level meeting which I was due to hold with the Executive Chairman either this month or when the new Executive Chairman assumes his post, but Mr. Ekéus could not be dissuaded, and dispatched the inspection team to Iraq.

The Chief Inspector, Colonel Ritter, mentioned at the meeting held on 2 June 1997 that the mission of the team was to ascertain that concealment mechanisms do not currently exist. He requested interviews with officers of the armed forces who have no connection with the programmes covered by resolution 687 (1991), and said that he intended to inspect a number of sites. The day after its arrival, the team began to carry out inspections. While it was in Iraq, from 3 to 12 June 1997, the team inspected 40 sites (Appendix II). Those included sites directly related to the security of the Presidency of the State, sites belonging to the Ministry of Defence, and the Ba'ath Arab Socialist Party and the Security and Intelligence Services, in addition to other sites. Some of those sites had already been inspected by UNSCOM 182 in March 1997.

With regard to the incidents referred to in the letter dated 12 June 1997 from Mr. Rolf Ekéus addressed to the President of the Security Council, I would like to point out the following:

1. The first site: On 10 June 1997, Colonel Ritter requested and was granted access to the headquarters of the Iraqi Intelligence Service in Baghdad. He inspected one site which he subsequently said was not the one he had intended to inspect and requested access to the office of the political section of the Intelligence Service. As this contains highly confidential material, we did not grant this request.

2. The second site: On 12 June 1997, Colonel Ritter requested access to a site related to the security of the Presidency, which he had already inspected twice in July and August 1996. This time we did not grant access.

As regards the third site referred to in the letter, we are unsure as to which Mr. Ekéus has in mind. All we do know is that on 12 June 1997, prior to Colonel Ritter's request for access to the site mentioned in 2 above, he requested permission to use a road related to a Presidential site, without specifying the site designated for inspection. We suggested that he should use another road, but he objected, and cancelled the mission.

Our reason for denying the inspection team access to the two sites mentioned in 1 and 2 above is our serious concern that access to those sites is not for the purpose of implementing the mandate of the Special Commission under relevant Security Council resolutions, but rather to use the facilities available to the Special Commission under its mandate as a cover to detect the arrangements made for the security of Iraq, its leadership and the personnel involved. You and the members of the Security Council are well aware of the United States' position towards Iraq and its political system.

Our concern is increased by the fact that many of those who carry out inspection team missions are United States nationals, seconded to work with the Special Commission. Colonel Ritter, the Chief Inspector who insisted, with no justification, on gaining access to these two sites, is an officer in the United States army.

On this occasion, I should like to stress the following:

1. The allegations of the Special Commission regarding the concealment of proscribed items, and the existence of secret mechanisms for arranging this concealment are false, and the Commission has no concrete evidence to substantiate them. We have pointed out to the Special Commission that limited operations of no practical value were carried out in 1991 by Hussein Kamil and a very small number of individuals. Subsequent to August 1995, we made all the facts and information related to those operations available to the Special Commission, and it interviewed those involved, and visited the sites of concealment, over a period of several months.

Nevertheless, none of our efforts and sincere and transparent cooperation since August 1995 have affected the determination of the Special Commission to repeat these allegations. This makes us suspect that the aim is to keep matters in a state of flux, and justify the endless continuation of the embargo, which serves the well-known purposes of a certain State.

You will recall that last year Mr. Ekéus was repeating allegations that Iraq might retain an operational missile force. After Iraq had submitted concrete material evidence of the missiles that had been destroyed, and subsequent to the agreement I reached with Mr. Ekéus in February 1997, to the effect that the missiles should be analysed outside Iraq, in order to determine conclusively their material composition, such allegations were heard no more. However, so far the Special Commission has not provided any results from the process of analysis which it would appear has also become a bottomless pit.

Here I should like to refer to my letter dated 5 June 1997 to Mr. Ekéus on this matter.

2. Iraq, having allowed the inspection team to inspect 40 of the 43 sites to which the Chief Inspector, Colonel Ritter, requested access, cannot be described as uncooperative. The fact that we denied access to the sites which we have described above cannot be interpreted as a decision by the Government of Iraq to prevent the Special Commission implementing its mandate, as Mr. Ekéus alleges.

3. Given the repeated inquiries of Colonel Ritter when given access to sites related to the security of the Presidency as to the names of the officers responsible for those sites, the detailed tasks of all sections thereof, the men's ability to and methods of carrying out their duties, it became quite clear to us that the aim of gaining access to such sites was not to implement the mandate of the Special Commission, but rather to achieve other purposes, unrelated to the Special Commission's mandate and the relevant Security Council resolutions.

This was confirmed to us by his request for access to the site mentioned in 2 above, which he had inspected twice in 1996 under the pretext of investigating the issue of concealment. On neither occasion did he find anything to substantiate his allegations. Anyone with experience of intelligence operations knows that repeated access to such a site is for purposes of updating information about this site, and not in order to verify alleged concealment operations. The same applies to his request to gain access to the political section of the Iraqi Intelligence Service.

4. Iraqi interests call for cooperation with the Special Commission, in order to fulfil the requirements of section C of resolution 687 (1991), so that the Council may, pursuant to its responsibilities, begin to consider implementation of paragraph 22 of the aforementioned resolution. Therefore, any allegation that Iraq is not cooperating is completely illogical.

In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council Iraq has the right to safeguard its national security. It hopes the Security Council, which has always stressed the necessity of respecting Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity, will adopt a concrete position embodying that recognition and balancing the rights of the Special Commission with Iraq's legitimate rights. Iraq also hopes that the Council will direct the Special Commission to act within the limits of its mandate, and carry out its work in a business-like and technical manner, without seeking to extend it. The Commission should also submit its final report to the Security Council stating the firm fact that Iraq has fulfilled all its obligations under section C of resolution 687 (1991), thereby enabling the Security Council to proceed quickly to consideration of the implementation of paragraph 22 of resolution 687 (1991).

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Tariq Aziz
Deputy Prime Minister

Appendix I

The sites inspected by the UNSCOM 182 team in the period 8-16 March 1997

Ser.	Date	Site	Location	Remarks
1.	8 March 1997	Special Security Apparatus Section	Baghdad	
2.	8 March 1997	Special Republican Guards Section	Baghdad	
3.	8 March 1997	Iraqi Intelligence Service Headquarters	Baghdad	
4.	9 March 1997	Special Security Apparatus Office	Baghdad	
5.	9 March 1997	Iraqi Intelligence Service Section	Baghdad	
6.	9 March 1997	Special Republican Guards Regiment	Baghdad	
7.	10 March 1997	Special Security Apparatus Office	Baghdad	
8.	11 March 1997	Iraqi Intelligence Service Headquarters	Baghdad	
9.	12 March 1997	Special Republican Guards Regiment	Baghdad	
10.	12 March 1997	Special Republican Guards Unit	Baghdad	
11.	14 March 1997	Salah al-Din Governorate building	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	
12.	14 March 1997	College belonging to Ministry of Higher Education	Salah al-Din University (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with Air Inspection Team (AIT) and UNSCOM 181
13.	14 March 1997	Special Republican Guards Regiment	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with AIT and UNSCOM 181
14.	14 March 1997	Presidential site	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with AIT and UNSCOM 181
15.	14 March 1997	Dairy Factory - private sector	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with AIT and UNSCOM 181
16.	14 March 1997	Warehouses - Ministry of Trade	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with AIT and UNSCOM 181
17.	14 March 1997	Security office	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with AIT, UNSCOM 179 and UNSCOM 181
18.	14 March 1997	Office - Military Intelligence	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with AIT, UNSCOM 179 and UNSCOM 181

Ser.	Date	Site	Location	Remarks
19.	14 March 1997	Office - Intelligence Services	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with AIT, UNSCOM 179 and UNSCOM 181
20.	14 March 1997	Traffic Office - Ministry of the Interior	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with AIT, UNSCOM 179 and UNSCOM 181
21.	15 March 1997	Presidential site	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with AIT and UNSCOM 181
22.	16 March 1997	Special Republican Guards Regiment	Baghdad	
23.	16 March 1997	Special Republican Guards Brigade	Baghdad	
24.	16 March 1997	Grain silo - Ministry of Trade	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with AIT
25.	16 March 1997	Workshop - Ministry of the Interior	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with AIT
26.	16 March 1997	Regiment - Ministry of the Interior	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with AIT
27.	16 March 1997	Technical secondary school - Ministry of Education	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with AIT
28.	16 March 1997	Factory - Ministry of Industry	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with AIT
29.	16 March 1997	Bread oven - private sector	Salah al-Din Governorate (Tikrit)	Inspected jointly with AIT

Appendix II

The sites inspected by the UNSCOM 194 team in the period 3-12 June 1997

Ser.	Date	Site	Location	Remarks
1.	3 June 1997	Special Republican Guards - Brigade	Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
2.	3 June 1997	Special Republican Guards - Regiment	Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
3.	3 June 1997	Special Republican Guards - Unit	Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
4.	3 June 1997	Factory - Special Republican Guards	Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
5.	3 June 1997	Warehouse - Special Security Services	Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
6.	3 June 1997	Baath party garage	Central Baghdad	
7.	4 June 1997	Special Republican Guards - Regiment	West Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
8.	4 June 1997	Special Republican Guards - Unit	West Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
9.	4 June 1997	Special Republican Guards - Tank Battalion	West Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
10.	4 June 1997	Special Republican Guards - Company	West Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
11.	4 June 1997	Warehouse - Republican Guards	West Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
12.	4 June 1997	Republican Guards - Unit	West Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
13.	4 June 1997	Warehouse - Republican Guards	West Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
14.	4 June 1997	Republican Guards Airport	West Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
15.	4 June 1997	Missile Brigade - Ministry of Defence	West Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
16.	4 June 1997	Military Court - Ministry of Defence	West Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
17.	4 June 1997	Party Office	West Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
18.	4 June 1997	Party Section	West Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
19.	4 June 1997	Warehouse - Ministry of Defence	West Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
20.	4 June 1997	Regiment - Ministry of Defence	West Baghdad	Inspected jointly with AIT
21.	5 June 1997	Special Republican Guards Regiment	Salah al-Din Governorate (Ba'iji)	Inspected jointly with AIT

/...

Ser.	Date	Site	Location	Remarks
22.	5 June 1997	An anti-aircraft battery - Special Republican Guards	Salah al-Din Governorate (Ba'iji)	Inspected jointly with AIT
23.	5 June 1997	Military Hospital - Ministry of Defence	Salah al-Din Governorate	Inspected jointly with AIT
24.	5 June 1997	Military Hospital - Ministry of Defence	Salah al-Din Governorate	Inspected jointly with AIT
25.	5 June 1997	Special Republican Guards Brigade	Salah al-Din Governorate	Inspected jointly with AIT
26.	7 June 1997	Security Office	Salah al-Din Governorate	
27.	7 June 1997	Security Office - Special Security Apparatus	Salah al-Din Governorate	
28.	7 June 1997	Special Republican Guards Regiment	Salah al-Din Governorate	
29.	7 June 1997	Special Republican Guards Company	Salah al-Din Governorate	
30.	7 June 1997	Special Republican Guards Office	Salah al-Din Governorate	
31.	8 June 1997	Special Security Apparatus Office	Baghdad	
32.	8 June 1997	Military Academy of the Ministry of Defence	Baghdad	
33.	8 June 1997	Special Republican Guards Unit	Baghdad	
34.	10 June 1997	Intelligence Service Headquarters	Baghdad	Inspected jointly with the UNSCOM 188 team
35.	10 June 1997	An Intelligence Service Section	Baghdad	Inspected jointly with the UNSCOM 188 team
36.	10 June 1997	Intelligence Service Headquarters	Baghdad	Inspected jointly with the UNSCOM 188 team
37.	11 June 1997	Special Republican Guards Battalion	Baghdad	
38.	11 June 1997	Special Republican Guards Brigade	Baghdad	
39.	11 June 1997	Special Republican Guards Regiment	Baghdad	
40.	12 June 1997	Special Republican Guards Regiment	Baghdad	